

The hope, then, as I see it, for the Negro, or any other race of people, is to learn, as speedily as possible, how to take hold of the great forces that make for their industrial betterment. No nation has ever risen to a great position that did not first take hold of material agencies and make the forces of nature contribute to wealth and progress.

### Time to Take a New Departure

First, then, we must turn our attention to technical education. I do not discount any of the work that is being done in the public schools, or in our secondary schools, or in our colleges and universities. On the other hand, I am proud of the record we have made and the success we have achieved along the lines of education as laid out by these great institutions. They have done a vast amount of good. And I hope never to see any decrease in the facilities which the Negro enjoys for common school and for college and university education. On the other hand, I want to see them multiplied a thousandfold.

But the time has come for the Negro, as a race, to take a new departure, to recognize the fact that there is now an urgent necessity that he become a skilled laborer and educated artisan, a worker in brass, and iron, and steel, and electricity. Turn which way you will and you will find a demand for men who know more than there is in books. Men who understand manufacturing; men who can manage electric devices and direct machinery; men who can build houses and bridges and viaducts; men who can wield the force, finger the telegraph board, carve wood into forms of utility and beauty, chisel marble into sculptural shapes, and swing the granite blocks into piles of architectural grandeur and symmetry.

The Negro can no longer be content to hold the place of an unskilled laborer and receive only the wages which underworkmen receive. He must aspire to a master workman, to make for himself a place among the educated, trained laborers of this country.

As a people, we must read the signs of the times. We must develop, as the white people of this country have done, our mechanical and inventive powers.

To do this, we must turn our attention to this great and pressing matter. We must begin to found and endow schools for the technical education of our people. We must wisely follow the lead of Hon. Booker T. Washington, and make industrial training prominent in our system of education.

Professor Washington has demonstrated beyond question that the Negro has the talent for industrial success; he has shown that he can become an artisan of the first class; that he can succeed in all technical labors equally as well as his white brother.

### Open a New Chapter in the Negro's History

As I see it, the time has now fully come for our leaders to open a new chapter in the Negro's history, to launch him forth upon a career of industrial activity and development that will secure his place in the progressive development of this country.

We have now arrived at the stage in our history where it is practical to begin on a large scale this industrial education. For more than forty-five years we have been struggling to teach our people the rudiments of knowledge, to give them what is called a common-school education, and a few of them the blessings of secondary and higher education or college training. We have made rapid strides on these lines, and so great has been our success that we can say to the world, Fifty-eight per cent of the colored people of America can read and write—in other words, five million of Negroes in this country can read and write. We have, therefore, never been ready, as now, to divert our efforts for the education of the Negroes into the channels of technical training, for the simple reason that we had to teach them first to read and write.

But I believe that, in the providence of God, the hour has arrived for us to take this new departure. The foundation has been laid, and now we must begin work upon it by introducing this new feature of technical culture, so that we, as a race, may seize the opportunity of making ourselves trained artisans.

### A Great Technological School

A great technological school for Negro boys should be erected in every Southern state, and an industrial school for our colored girls. The exigencies of the times demand it, and the necessity for it is so great that no thoughtful person can fail to see it.

We must bestir ourselves on this most vital question. The philanthropy of Northern men, which has prompted them to erect schools and colleges in the South for the higher education of the Negro, will be to a large extent wasted if they do not see to it that these schools and colleges are supplemented by industrial pursuits of life, and hand in hand will go the cultured citizen and the educated artisan.